

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 001366

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/RSP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD -  
ROBERT PALLADINO  
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: RICE'S BEIJING TRIP AND THE  
ANTI-SECESSION LAW

Summary: The focus of the major Chinese-language Taipei dailies has shifted March 24 from China's Anti-Secession Law to local politics and the planned mass rally that will be hosted by the DPP this coming Saturday to protest the law. Former AIT Chairman Richard Bush and incumbent Director of the Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies at the Brookings Institute, out of concern for the cross-strait situation, said in an op-ed piece in the centrist "China Times" that in response to the Anti-Secession Law, the exercise of restraint will best meet Taiwan's own interests and will win approval from the United States. When commenting on U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's recent trip to Beijing, Washington correspondent James Wang said in the pro-independence "Taiwan Daily" that Rice's decision not to repeat the sentence that "Washington does not support Taiwan independence" is the easiest way for the Bush administration to show its displeasure over China's hegemonic behavior. A limited-circulation, pro-independence English-language "Taiwan News" editorial said the actual focus of Rice's greatest concern with regard to her trip to Asia was related to the PRC. End summary.

A) "It Would Be Best for Taiwan If It Does Not Overreact Too Much [to China's Anti-Secession Law]"

Former AIT Chairman Richard Bush wrote to the centrist, pro-status quo "China Times" [circulation: 600,000] (3/24):

" . Then how should Taiwan keep an appropriate balance between challenging Beijing's 'Anti-Secession Law' and exercising self-restraint? I believe it to be correct for the Taiwan authorities to exercise restraint by far. Taiwan should avoid moves that would add oil to the fire, or it will be unable to adopt more positive steps when the atmosphere across the Taiwan Strait gets better. .

"The third reason for Taiwan to exercise restraint has something to do with the role of the United States. Because the United States has a security commitment to Taiwan and the fact that Beijing might misjudge the impact of the clash of interests caused by Taiwan's moves, Washington and Taiwan need to deal with the situation adroitly through close negotiations. The Bush administration has explicitly told Beijing that it opposes the Anti-Secession Law. One day when the conditions for China to utilize 'non-peaceful measures' are ready, Washington will make a detached judgment and take action. No matter now or hereafter, the United States can take powerful action to constrain Beijing's moves if Taiwan can live up to Washington's expectations from the beginning to the end.

"Lastly, if Taiwan maintains its self-control, it would be more easier to extend from the negotiations during cross-strait charter flights for the Lunar New Year to positive development on bilateral relations. It would suit Taiwan's needs to keep pushing for progress in a way with principles. To show self-control for the time being can keep [alive] precious possibilities in the future. Until then, Taiwan could also win approvals from the United States.

"Maybe some people think Beijing will interpret Taiwan's self-control as showing weakness. However, self-control in this case could strengthen Taiwan's position. It would allow Taiwan to cultivate an internal consensus, which is rare, to cope with China's moves. To keep self-control would not increase the chance for China's misjudgment, and could show to the international community that who the strength that maintains cross-strait stability is. Keeping self-control could consolidate the foundation of Taiwan's security, which is the relationship with the United States."

B) "Rice Is Using the Measures to Counter Russia When

## Dealing with China"

Washington correspondent James Wang commented in the pro-independence "Taiwan Daily" [circulation: 150,000] (3/24):

". In her remarks [made in Beijing], [U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza] Rice evidently avoided mentioning two sentences that Washington has constantly repeated in the past: 'The United States does not support Taiwan independence' and 'Disputes across the Taiwan Strait should be resolved by both sides using peaceful means.' It would be totally implausible if [we said] the fact that Rice skipped the sentence about not supporting Taiwan independence has nothing to do with China's arbitrary enacting of the Anti-Secession Law. In the name of anti-Taiwan independence, the law attempts to annex Taiwan's sovereignty and deprive Taiwan people of the right to make a free choice. If Rice made the remark that [the United States] does not support Taiwan independence in Beijing, it would be like giving verbal support to China to suppress Taiwan people's basic political rights - an act that is inconsistent with the Bush administration's 'to create a balance of power that is favorable for freedom.' [Rice's decision] not to repeat that sentence is the easiest way for the Bush administration to show its displeasure to the Chinese hegemonic behavior. .

"Given the fact that China's future direction is yet unclear and it is attempting to intimidate Taiwan using the Anti-Secession Law, the possibility of a 'peaceful resolution' to the cross-Strait issue does not exist at all, whether judged by reality or U.S. interests. The United States itself does not want to see any alteration to the status quo in the Taiwan Strait; therefore, a 'peaceful resolution' is a distant goal. What really concerns the United States is that neither side should use any words or actions to create tensions across the Taiwan Strait. [Rice's] remarks have changed the injustice that has been done to Taiwan by the [criteria] of 'Taiwan does not declare independence while Beijing does not use force against Taiwan. .' This is a favorable change for Taiwan created by the Anti-Secession Law. ."

### C) "Rice Visit Defines PRC as U.S. Worry"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" [circulation: 20,000] editorialized (3/24):

". On the surface, the focal point of [U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza] Rice's hectic excursion, which took her through Pakistan, Japan and China, was still Washington's effort to resuscitate the dormant six-sided talks over the brewing crisis regarding the North Korea's apparent possession of nuclear weapons. However, the actual object of her greatest concern lay in the People's Republic of China.

"Even before she arrived in Beijing, Rice had used a carefully crafted and orchestrated series of lectures and leaks to set the dominant theme of her visit, namely, at least for the next few years, Washington considered China as a national security threat instead of a 'strategic partner. .'

"Even when Rice was the National Security Adviser for U.S. President George W. Bush, she believed that the main danger to U.S. security in the Pacific region came from China.

"Rice's prime concern is the defense of U.S. interests and security in the Pacific, not the defense of Taiwan. As far as Rice is concerned, China is the chief geopolitical rival of the U.S. in the Pacific region and is not simply one side or actor in the more narrow dispute over the Taiwan Strait.

"The key tone set by Rice in her visit may well remain in effect and guide Washington's security and diplomatic strategy in Pacific area geopolitics for the remainder of Bush's term. ."

PAAL